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ABSTRACT

One of a series of profiles prepared by the Cooperative Educational Abstracting Service, this brief outline provides basic background information on educational principles, system of administration, structure and organization, curricula, and teacher training in Bulgaria. Statistics provided by the Unesco Office of Statistics show enrollment at all levels, from preprimary to adult; number of teachers; population by age groups; public expenditure on education; educational indicators by subject (level enrollment ratios, maximum age specific enrollment ratio, enrollment in natural and applied sciences at the third level, public expenditure on education as a percentage of budget and of GNP, and the adult illiteracy rate). For a description on the general nature of the Country Education Profiles, and for a list of related documents see SO 005 686. (JMB)

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Country

BULGARIA

General principles

Under the terms of article 45 of the Constitution of 16 May 1971, "citizens are entitled to free instruction in all types of educational establishment at all levels, according to the conditions laid down by law. Public educational establishments are under the control of the State. Education is based on contemporary science and Marxist-Leninist ideology. Primary education is compulsory.

The State has created the conditions necessary for making school instruction available to all. The State encourages education, improves all aspects of working conditions in the various educational establishments, awards scholarships and encourages outstandingly gifted pupils. Citizens who are not of Bulgarian origin have the right to learn their mother tongue in addition to the compulsory study of the Bulgarian language."

The main legislative body in the country is the National Assembly. It passes the laws relating to public education. The National Assembly has set up a parliamentary commission to assist in carrying out the decisions of the National Assembly and the Council of Ministers on problems of public education. The Council of State of the Bulgarian People's Republic issues decrees on educational matters when the National Assembly is not in session.

System of administration

The Ministry of Education directs instruction throughout the country from the ideological, methodological, pedagogical and administrative points of view, in accordance with the laws, decrees and decisions of the Council of Ministers and the Party's policy in the field of education. It takes decisions on the opening and closing of primary teacher training institutes, secondary education establishments and technical vocational schools. The Ministry acts in close collaboration with the Bulgarian Union of Teachers.

The direct management of secondary schools is carried out by the departmental people's councils which include

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public education sections comprising school directors and inspectors.

The departmental people's councils, in accordance with the directives of the Party and the Government relating to public education, take decisions on the opening and closing of primary and elementary educational establishments.

The inspection and supervision of education are carried out through: (a) the public education sections of the departmental people's councils; these sections employ inspectors responsible for the supervision and direction of education from the pedagogical and administrative angles, and specialist inspectors for the various subjects of general education, who are responsible for supervision and direction as regards method; (b) the Ministry of Education, which includes an inspection department to supervise the work of the various public education sections. In addition there are specialist inspectors for all general subjects, who assist and supervise the work of the corresponding departmental school inspectors, take part in the preparation of curricula and of pedagogical instruction, organize conferences for teachers on a national level, etc.

The Ministry also comprises a section responsible for methodological guidance in the teaching of general technical subjects and of the special subjects involved in studies, laboratory work and apprenticeship in production at technical vocational schools.

Structure and organization

Kindergartens are open to children aged 3 to 7 years. The main purposes of these establishments are to lay the foundations for a harmonious development of the personality, to prepare psychologically for schooling proper, and to relieve parents who are active in the economic, cultural, social and political life of the country. An extensive network of kindergartens already exists throughout the country and runs on a half-day, a whole-day or a weekly basis. In the last case, the children live in from Monday to Saturday and return to their parents on Sundays. The children are in the care of kindergarten teachers. Their physical development is supervised by a nurse and a doctor. There are also seasonal kindergartens which take the children for several months of the year only, in accordance with local needs.

Eight years' compulsory education is provided by an extensive network of primary, elementary and secondary schools, high schools, technicums and vocational technical schools. On completion of the 8th primary year, pupils receive a leaving certificate based on the marks obtained in the various subjects studied in the 8th year. Entrance to a higher level of education depends on the average of these marks.

General secondary education covers a three-year course of studies after the end of primary education. It is given in high schools. Pupils completing the last secondary school year (11th year of schooling) sit for the baccalaureate examination which comprises five basic subjects. Those who pass obtain their secondary school certificate which enables them to take the entrance examination to any higher education establishment.

Vocational technical education is provided in vocational technical schools and secondary technical schools. The former train skilled workers for the various branches of the national economy, the latter prepare staff for certain more complicated occupations and specialities in the field of mechanics, the electro-technical industry, the chemical industry, etc. In vocational technical schools the course lasts two years, while in secondary technical schools it lasts three. For admission to either of these types of schools, pupils must have completed their eight years of primary schooling. In vocational technical schools the course leads to a qualifying examination usually based on two subjects and an apprenticeship test, while in the secondary technical schools it leads to a baccalaureate examination in Bulgarian language and literature and in mathematics, plus a qualifying examination similar to the one taken in vocational technical schools. Semi-higher education is mostly given in primary teacher training institutes. The course takes two years after the end of secondary education.

At the higher level, the country currently possesses the following higher education establishments: 7 for technical engineers, 3 for chemical engineers, 3 for specialists in rural economy, 3 higher schools of economics, a university, 3 schools of fine art and a school of physical culture.

The school year begins on 15 September for all educational establishments and ends: for the first four primary classes on 31 May; for the 5th to 8th classes on 15 June; for the 9th and 10th classes in general secondary schools, specialized secondary schools, vocational technical schools and higher schools on 30 June, and for pupils in the 11th year on 24 May. The financial year begins in January.

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Curricula

The curricula are drawn up by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Bulgarian Academy of Science. Special committees prepare courses and submit them for the approval of the Ministry's board of department chiefs. These committees are composed of scientists, active teachers, school directors, eminent teachers, public figures, parents, and representatives of the various ministries concerned. Before approval, the draft curricula are published in the press for discussion on a nation-wide scale; they are amended on the basis of the criticisms received.

Teacher training

Teachers in the first four classes receive training at a semi-higher level in specialized institutes. Those who teach from the 5th to the 11th classes receive special and pedagogical training at higher level. Teachers in specialized secondary schools are: for general subjects, specialists with higher specialized and pedagogical training; for technical subjects, engineers, architects, agronomists, doctors, etc.; for laboratory work and apprenticeship in production, specialists with higher or semi-higher training received in a special pedagogical institute where the course lasts two years after the end of the technicum course.

The University of Sofia plays an important part in teacher training and in research on educational science and teaching method.

Adult education

Workers and employees may receive secondary or specialized education, vocational technical or higher education, without ceasing work in their occupation. Evening courses (in teams) and correspondence courses are provided for this purpose. Refresher courses are also run by firms for their personnel.

Evening and correspondence courses last half a year longer than ordinary courses. Persons who take these courses enjoy the same rights as those passing through the corresponding daytime establishments.

Under the Workers' Code and other governmental regulations, persons who study without ceasing work receive additional paid leave and their working day is reduced by one hour without loss of salary.

STATISTICS

BULGARIA

(Source : Unesco Office of Statistics)

Estimated population 1970 : 8 490 000
 Area (Km2) : 110 912
 Inhabitants per Km2 : 77

1. ENROLMENT

Level of education	1965	1969	1970
<u>Pre-primary</u>			
MF	362 093	330 945	331 960
F	...	...	...
<u>First level^{1/}</u>			
MF	1 129 315	1 064 200	1 053 681
F	543 302	515 180	510 001
<u>Second level^{2/}</u>			
MF	386 732	377 788	384 159
F	182 589	179 210	183 788
<u>Third level^{2/}</u>			
MF	100 102	95 706	99 596
F	43 427	46 458	50 445
<u>Special education</u>			
MF	14 592	16 942	16 870
F	5 434	6 214	6 137
<u>Adult education</u>			
MF	...	...	...
F	...	...	...

^{1/} Including evening schools.^{2/} Including evening and correspondence courses.

2. TEACHERS

Level of education	1965	1969	1970
<u>Pre-primary</u>			
MF	16 392	17 935	18 185
F	...	17 935	18 185
<u>First level^{1/}</u>			
MF	49 642	48 140	47 798
F	32 463	32 802	32 973
<u>Second level^{2/}</u>			
MF	21 394	23 293	23 769
F	9 783	10 964	11 487
<u>Third level</u>			
MF	6 538	7 191	7 680
F	1 661	1 830	2 006
<u>Special education</u>			
MF	1 703	2 090	2 155
F	1 029	1 310	1 342
<u>Adult education</u>			
MF	...	...	...
F	...	...	...

^{1/} Including evening schools.

^{2/} Including evening and correspondence courses.

3. POPULATION

In thousands

Population by age groups	1965		1970	
	Total	Female	Total	Female
Total population	8 200	4 102	8 518	4 255
0 - 4	642	312	657	320
5 - 14	1 339	655	1 291	630
15 - 19	700	344	684	319
20 - 24	588	290	697	335

4. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

Currency : Lev

In Thousands

Item	1965	1969	1970
Exchange rate in US \$	0.855	0.855	0.855
<u>Public expenditure on education</u>			
Total	295 965	436 740	501 683
Recurring	267 822	388 140	429 962
Capital	28 143	48 600	71 721

5. EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS BY SUBJECT

Subject	1965	1969	1970
<u>Level enrolment ratios</u>			
First and second levels combined (age group 7-18)	91	89	91
First level (age group 7-14)	104	101	101
Second level (age group 15-18)	65	66	71
Third level (age group 20-24)	17.02	14.21	14.29

5. EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS BY SUBJECT
(Cont'd)

Subject	1960	1968	1969
<u>Maximum age specific enrolment ratio</u>			
a) attending first 10) level (age..... 7) 8)	100	100	99.1
b) attending second level (age.....16) 15)	36.5	50.8	<u>1/</u> 54.9
(including all secondary education)			
Note : For ratios of all ages see Unesco Statistical Yearbook			

1/ Not including vocational schools.

Subject	1965	1969	1970
<u>Education at the third level : Natural and applied sciences +/- as a percentage of total enrolment</u>	60.7	60.3	60.6
<u>Third level graduates per 10 000 inhabitants aged 20 - 24 1/</u>	267.4	236.7	...

+/- Natural and applied sciences (i.e. Natural Sciences, Engineering, Medical Science and Agriculture).

1/ Not including advanced degrees.

5. EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS BY SUBJECT
(Cont'd)

Subject	1965	1969	1970
<u>Public expenditure on education</u>			
as a % of Budget	...	...	...
as a % of NMP	4.5	4.7	4.8
<u>Public and private expenditure on education as a % of GNP</u>	...	...	...

Subject	1956	1965
<u>Adult illiteracy rate</u> (population 15 years and over)		
Total	14.7	9.8
Male	7.3	4.8
Female	21.9	14.7